

Commonwealth of Virginia
Department of Social Services



ONS TRANSMITTAL NUMBER 05 01

Date: January 12, 2005

Subject: Virginia General Assembly 2005
Bill Review Assistance Request

To: ONS Resettlement Provider Directors

From: Kathy A. Cooper
Virginia State Refugee Coordinator
Virginia Office of Newcomer Services

Contact: Penny Boyd, penny.boyd@dss.virginia.gov or 804-726-7933

This is to ask for your assistance in analyzing proposed state legislation that may affect refugees.

The Virginia General Assembly (GA) convenes at noon on Wednesday, January 12 and adjourns on Saturday, February 26. The Virginia Department of Social Services (VDSS) monitors proposed legislation that may affect the clients it serves and the programs it administers.

The VDSS Commissioner asks the Office of Newcomer Services (ONS) to write an analysis of proposed legislation that may affect refugees and to evaluate the bill's potential fiscal impact. The written analysis is to include comments from "affected constituents," explaining the potential effect of the bill on constituents, constituent organizations, and the organizations' positions on the bill, if known.

If ONS is asked to prepare a VDSS analysis of a bill, Penny Boyd will fax and e-mail a copy to you. If Penny asks you to review a bill, she will ask for your reply within four hours of receipt of her request. Please understand this short timeframe is a result of the fast pace of most General Assembly actions and VDSS internal analysis procedures.

Sometimes ONS is *not* asked to prepare an analysis of proposed legislation that may affect refugees and the broader immigrant population. *When ONS is aware of such bills*, we will forward them to you for your information and not ask for your comments.

Attached is a list of the contact names, e-mail addresses, and fax numbers Penny will use. Please review it and send corrections to this list directly to penny.boyd@dss.virginia.gov

Also attached is an optional "Affected Constituent Inquiry Form" for your use when commenting on bills.

FYI: During the legislative session, you can track activities on all bills the General Assembly is considering through the Legislative Information System Website at <http://legis.state.va.us/>

Thank you in advance for your assistance.

Kathy Cooper